

SPSO decision report

Case: 201507533, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

Miss C complained about the care and treatment received by her father (Mr A) during an admission to Queen Elizabeth University Hospital. Miss C said it took an unreasonable length time for Mr A to be reviewed by a doctor in the assessment unit, and that he was not treated for his urinary tract infection (UTI) for several days. Miss C was also concerned that Mr A's catheter became blocked on one occasion, and that it took several hours before this was changed. Miss C said that a doctor told her this had resulted in lasting kidney damage. Miss C also raised concerns that in their response to her complaint, the board gave an inaccurate account of what happened.

The board apologised that Mr A had waited so long to be reviewed, and for a lack of communication during the admission. However, the board said Mr A did not have a UTI on admission, but developed this a few days later (which was treated). The board also considered Mr A's blocked catheter was treated appropriately.

After taking independent medical and nursing advice, we upheld Miss C's complaints about medical care and communication. We found that there was no evidence Mr A had a UTI on admission, and that this was treated reasonably when it developed a few days later. We also found the blocked catheter was treated appropriately, and that there was no evidence that this had caused damage to Mr A's kidneys. However, we considered the delay in Mr A being reviewed was unreasonable, and we recommended the board provide more detail on how this is being addressed. We also found failings in communication, although we noted the board had already acknowledged and apologised for this, which we considered appropriate.

In relation to complaints handling, we found a factual inaccuracy in the board's response (describing the position of the blocked catheter). This appeared to be an error, and we did not consider the overall response to have been unreasonable.

Recommendations

We recommended that the board:

- provide evidence of the action being taken to reduce waiting times for patients in the assessment unit.